# Guidance note: *Information for Prospective and Current Students*

 (June 2025)

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| Providers should note that Guidance Notes are intended to provide guidance only. The definitive instruments for regulatory purposes remain the TEQSA Act and the Higher Education Standards Framework as amended from time to time. |

## What does Information for Prospective and Current Students encompass?

In the context of the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* (Threshold Standards) a provider is required to make relevant information publicly available to current and prospective students.

The primary obligations around the provision of information can be found in Section 7.2 of the Threshold Standards. The purpose of these standards is to ensure a provider offers the following:

* adequate information for potential students in plain English before they accept any offers, so students can make informed decisions about whether to enter a course. Providers are also encouraged to provide information in other languages to suit the needs of their cohorts.
* accurate and timely information that is publicly accessible and in formats all students, including those with diverse needs can access. This is to ensure students are aware of resources, policies, processes, and support services available relevant to their studies at the provider
* reasonable notice of changes to a higher education provider’s operation, such as fees and costs, so students can make timely and informed decisions about how to respond to those changes
* policies and procedures to ensure information provided to international students and those applying for an Australian student visa meet statutory requirements. In ensuring this, a provider should consider how its work can best support its international students, acknowledging they may be unfamiliar with Australian laws, and need to be kept up to date on issues affecting their ability to study in Australia
* information to assist international students to study in Australia, such as the indicative cost of living and studying in Australian, health care and accommodation.

The following information is briefly covered by this guidance note, however additional information is available in their individual guidance notes:

* Section 7.1 of the Threshold Standards – representations and the accuracy of educational offerings and charges. This information is discussed in the Representation Guidance note (for consultation)
* Section 7.3 of the Threshold Standards – providers’ information management processes, their operation and how they protect student information. This information is discussed in the Information Management Guidance note (for consultation).

## What TEQSA will look for

The Threshold Standards place requirements on a provider about information they make available to prospective and current students. These include the following:

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| **Part A: Standards for HE Providers** | **Key considerations** |
| 1.1: Admission | * students are informed of their rights and obligations prior to admission, including, charges, policies covering recognition of prior learning and policies on changes and withdrawal from offers, enrolment, tuition protection and refunds.
* admissions policies, requirements and procedures are documented and applied fairly and consistently to ensure transparency.
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| 2.3: Wellbeing and Safety | * students are informed about the services available to support their wellbeing and safety, including how student feedback can improve related policies and procedures.
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| 2.4: Student Grievances and Complaints | * policies and procedures for resolving grievances and complaints are made available to students.
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| 7.1.1 – 3: Representation | * representations of educational offerings, whether made directly with a provider or through an agent are not misleading. This includes information about accreditation by agencies such as TEQSA, or by a professional accreditation body.
* information about units of study offered as eligible for credit (when separated from a course of study) are specified and defined.
* representations around work integrated learning should be clearly communicated to students.
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| 7.2.1 – 4: Information for Prospective and Current Students  | * accurate, relevant, and timely information for students is publicly available and accessible.
* sufficient information is publicly available for a student to make informed decisions about an educational offering.
* written communications to students are in plain English with explanations of any technical or specialised language used to improve the likelihood of understanding.
* policies and processes are in place to ensure information and advice given to international students, or those holding or applying for a student visa meet statutory requirements.
* processes are in place to provide students with reasonable notice of changes to operations, which may affect their choice of course of study, or ability to participate in it.
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| 7.3.1: Information Management | * current information about the provider’s operations is in a publicly available repository (this information will commonly be found on the provider’s website).
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### Provider information should inform student decision making

The primary purpose of providing this information is to ensure all students have access to quality information to make informed decisions about a provider’s educational offerings and experiences, and how they may best suit a student’s needs.

TEQSA expects providers to make its information available to students through its website and in formats readily accessible by all students, including those with diverse needs.

### What type of information should be made available?

TEQSA expects providers to make information available to students through its website and in formats readily accessible by all students, including those who have diverse needs.

Information TEQSA expects providers to make available to students includes information about:

* courses or units of study including course design, recognition of prior learning and pathways to employment
* student participation in educational and other activities, including access to IT systems, timetables, and opportunities to participate in student representative bodies
* obligations of students to the provider, including any particular obligations for international students, such as expected standards of behaviour, financial obligations and critical deadlines
* academic governance policies, including information about admission, assessment, grading, course completion, academic integrity, and equity and diversity
* access to support services, including English language support, personal support services and access to emergency contact information
* grievance resolution processes, including access to complaints and internal/external appeals support and advocacy
* support services for international students studying in Australia, including information about the indicative costs of living, and studying in Australia.

### A provider must provide reasonable notice of changes

Providers need to give students reasonable notice if there are changes to a provider’s operations. Changes that should prompt notifications to students include:

* increases to fees and associated costs
* changes that may impact a student’s ability to participate in an intended course of study.

All communications to students should be tailored to meet the needs of student cohorts who may be impacted by a change, e.g. international students and students with a disability, to enable affected students to understand and respond to a proposed change.

### Obligations applying to providers of education to overseas students studying in Australia

Further, where it applies to a provider, TEQSA also considers the [*National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L01182)(National Code) and the [*Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2022C00066)(ESOS Act).

Sections of the National Code relevant to information for prospective and current students are:

* **2.1** – prior to accepting an overseas student for enrolment in a course, the provider must make comprehensive, current, and plain English information available to the overseas student or intending overseas student.
* **2.1.1 – 11** ­–prior to making accepting overseas students for enrolment, a provide must provide information in plain English about requirements for entry into course of study, details of the course and how it will be taught, welfare arrangement for younger overseas students and costs of living in Australia.
* **3.3 – 3.5** –providers must enter into written agreements with an overseas student or intending overseas students. The written agreement:
	+ must contain information about course details, tuition fees, modes of delivery, refunds, and emergency contact.
	+ should be stand alone and only use links within the document to refer to supplementary material.
* **5.2** –students under the age of 18 must be given culturally appropriate information on who to contact in an emergency and how to seek assistance or report incidents involving actual/alleged sexual, physical, or other abuse.
* **6.1** –providers deliver age and culturally appropriate information and orientation programs to overseas students.
* **8.5** – providers must clearly outline and inform the overseas student before they commence the course of the requirements to achieve satisfactory course progress and, where applicable, attendance in each study period
* **10.1** –a provider is expected to have document and easily accessible processes and policies for handling complaints and appeals internally.

### Obligations applying to providers receiving financial support from the Commonwealth

Providers subject to the [*Higher Education Support Act 2003*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2022C00005) (HESA) are required to provide additional information to prospective and current students around student finances, student loan assistance and charges.

The HESA sets out, amongst other things, the parameters of what a provider can charge for the services it provides to students.

## Identified issues

Within the context of the Threshold Standards, TEQSA has identified a range of issues that are indicative of risks. These include, but are not limited to:

* information is limited or unavailable about:
	+ requirements under the National Code
	+ a provider’s complaint and appeals process
	+ course pre-requisites and admissions criteria
	+ recognition of prior learning requirements
* information produced by the provider uses extensive jargon and technical language that students are unfamiliar with
* information cannot be easily accessed by students with a disability
* webpages are not up-to-date and links to policies do not work.

## Related resources

* Guidance note: Representation (for consultation)
* Guidance note: Information Management (for consultation)
* [Guidance note: Admissions (Coursework)](https://www.teqsa.gov.au/guides-resources/resources/guidance-notes/guidance-note-admissions-coursework)
* [Australian Consumer Law Website](https://consumer.gov.au/resources-and-guides)
* [*Higher Education Support Act 2003*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2022C00005)

| **Version #** | **Date** | **Key changes** |
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